

January 2017 Newsletter

Happy New Year!

I wish I could say that this year there won't be any computer issues to deal with, but we all know better than that. ☹️ I told my friend Bunny that I'd try to keep it simple this month without a lot of Washington Post theatrics, but that's going to be tough! Maybe we can start with a few fun things....and then you could stop reading after that if you want. 😊



I was out to breakfast with my friend Mary the other morning and we were talking about ebates. Remember how I said you could "make" money while "spending" it if you signed up for an account? Well, the good news is that you don't have to just shop on-line now. You can download their app for your phone and when you're in the store you can use it there to make your purchase. When you download and install it, it has a little tutorial to show you how it works.

<https://www.ebates.com/mobile.htm> It's FREE and you get \$\$\$ back, so try it!



All the Apple people should be happy with this one! With a Windows computer you get “bloatware” installed when you buy it. It’s all the software programs they add to make it look like you got a lot for your money. 😊 Remember when they used to install Microsoft Works free? Well, now you get links to websites and free trials that last for 30 days. On our phones, we get the same thing, but the “bloatware” can’t be removed. My phone came with **McAfee** and I did not want it! I tried to delete it and read every article I could to find a solution for removing it, but nothing worked. Since I don’t have an iPhone, I’ll need to wait for something that works for my android, but this link should help a lot of you!

http://videos.komando.com/watch/9627/komando-flash-tips-how-to-finally-get-rid-of-pre-installed-apple-apps?utm_medium=nl&utm_source=totd&utm_content=2016-11-29-video-c

200,000 free images you can use for anything



Did you know that the New York Public Library (NYPL) has over 200,000 images that you can download for free? Not only can you download them for free, but you can also reuse them in an almost infinite number of ways. This was made possible when the Library made its Digital Collections public domain in January 2016. You can download all of these images in the **highest resolution available**

directly from its Digital Collections website. Permission is not required and there are no restrictions on use. The Library has even added some special features. There are public domain remixes, which is an effort to inspire new works. You can take a tour of New York's Fifth Avenue, both past and present. Compare photos from the 1911 Fifth Avenue from Start to Finish collection with 2015's Google Street View. There's even a maze-building game that allows you to examine mansion floor plans from early 20th century New York City. This is a great way to add some terrific images to your collection. Also, the Digital Collections in the public domain is always expanding. The NYPL adds images to the collection almost every day. If you love history, why not spend some time looking through the archives of photos that are available. I know my Dad would have loved this!

Download Instructions

Click on the blue link below >> Click on Visualize the Public Domain >> Click Explore >> Click on a date range to see images from that time period, for example, the 14th century >> Click on the image that you want to download >> Select a file size under Download Options >> The image is now downloaded onto your gadget. Check your download folder for the image. [Download for Windows - Free](#)



Information all in One Place!

This website is put together nicely so you can find information on many topics all in one place. It includes an encyclopedia, dictionary, thesaurus, atlas and timelines in history to name a few. It also has tools which include a calculator, perpetual calendar, conversion tools etc. <http://www.infoplease.com/>



Convert Your CD's to Digital Songs

For several months now I've been converting my old cassette music tapes to wav files to put on a flash drive. Now I can listen to them in the car or use them in my digital music library on Amazon's Alexa. How times have changed! Next will be the hundreds of CD's that have been sitting in the cabinet and never listened to because our CD player isn't working. 😊 As the media ages and technology changes, many of the wonderful recordings that we have are either deteriorating or can even be lost. There are plenty of ways to convert those discs into digital songs that you can play on your computer. One option to do both is called AIMP. It's a free download that you can use with a PC. Unfortunately, right now, you cannot download AIMP to a Mac. Once you download it, you'll find AIMP has many of the same functionality and features you'd find on a stereo. Plus, it has a few really great functions that many stereos never had. Think of this as a good "winter" project! [Download for Windows - Free](#)



Turn your tablet into a phone to get free calls and texts

Having a cellphone makes it convenient to keep in touch with family and friends, but sometimes the last thing you want to do is be stuck holding a phone up to your ear. Or, sometimes you'd like a larger screen so that it's easier to see the person you're video chatting with. If you have a tablet, these things won't be a problem. An app called **WePhone** can turn your tablet into a phone using your internet connection. **Making calls and sending text messages is free through WePhone, as long as you're communicating with others on the app.** You can also make calls to regular cellphones and landlines; however, usage rates do apply. To make calls to regular landlines and phones, you'll need to purchase WePhone credits. These credits work similarly to the minutes on a pre-paid phone card.

When you make a call, the specific rate for that call is deducted from your WePhone credits. Here are a few examples: Calling a number in the U.S. costs 10 cents per minute while making a call to Canada costs 55 cents per minute. WePhone credits never expire and can be purchased in the Store tab within the app. The Premium Lines feature within the app makes WePhone stand out. These lines have better voice quality than a standard line, but also have a higher price per minute. You can also record a call in the app just by tapping the REC button in the call view. **To avoid these fees and make calls to anywhere for free, just recommend that the person you're calling downloads the app too.** Then, you can call anyone, anywhere in the world for free using your tablet. The app also works on Apple and Android smartphones. If you're worried about keeping track of multiple phone numbers, don't be. WePhone actually uses your existing phone number and/or email address to create your WePhone identity. You can even program the app to show your phone number on other people's caller ID. Get the free download of WePhone for both Apple and Android by clicking the blue boxes below.

Apps Links

[Download for iOS - Free](#)

[Download for Android - Free](#)



Easy Way to Transfer Files

How many of you have ever emailed a file - like a photo or a document - to your Mac from your iPhone or iPad, even as you sit right in front of your Mac? Yes, I've done it too, just like nearly every other Apple user on the planet. That's probably because using email to move files around works pretty well as long as your file is small enough to be attached. But now there's a better way to move files among your gadgets or even among your friends. When Apple released iOS 8 along with the newest desktop OSX, Yosemite, it dramatically improved and simplified the way we are able to move files around. One great part of this function is that your Apple gadgets don't even need to be on the same network or signed into the

same iCloud account to move files back and forth. That means you can also move files to a friend or co-worker. However, there is one small caveat, users need to be near each other to transfer the files.

AirDrop - Apple AirDrop is a built-in app that lets you seamlessly move files back and forth between nearby desktop Macs and iOS gadgets like iPad, iPhone or iPod touch. This is a quick and convenient way to transfer files from an iOS gadget to a Mac using a Bluetooth connection. To enable AirDrop on an iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch, swipe up on the Home screen to access the Control Panel. From here, you can set AirDrop to receive from Contacts Only, Everyone, or turn it Off. To use AirDrop from a Mac, it is available from the Finder, the Share menu, and in Open and Save windows. When you select AirDrop, your Mac looks for nearby devices that can also use AirDrop. This includes Mac computers with OS X Lion or later installed, and iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch devices with iOS 7 or later.

AirMore For a comparable experience on Android, you can try the third-party app AirMore. It is the best multi-platform file transfer app for Android.

Here are some of AirMore's features:

- **File Transfer** - Easily transfer data, music, photos and videos between your Android gadget and PC with clicks. There is no need for cables.
- **Screen Reflector** - It's easy for you to reflect your Android gadget's screen to PC from AirMore Web. It's a great way to play a game on a bigger screen.
- **Simple connection** - Scan the QR Code on AirMore Web and get connected with ease.
- **Secure transfers** - AirMore makes the transfer between mobile gadgets and PC private and secure, as your approval is required for successful connection.
- **Multimedia streaming** - AirMore allows you to stream Android music, pictures and videos to your PC simply. Transferring is no longer necessary as you can stream media files to a large screen and share with others.

Click on the link below to download AirMore from the Google Play Store.

Apps Links

(courtesy komando.com)

[Download for Android - Free](#)



How to Create custom icons on your Mac

One thing I miss on my Mac that Windows has is the ability to create custom icons. Now you can do just that since Apple announced the iPhone 7 and Apple Watch Series. Along with the new phone and watch, Apple is releasing new operating systems for all its devices. Those operating systems will be available to download later this month as well.

With **MacOS Sierra**, you'll be able to change folder icons from the boring blue folder to an icon of your choosing.

Here's how:

1. Simply find an image you want to use and copy it.
2. Select the folder you want to customize, then right click and select: "Get Info."
3. On the window that opens up, click the folder symbol in the upper left corner.
4. On the Finder taskbar, Click Edit >> Paste to change the folder icon to the copied image.

I've tried it and it's easy! 😊



What is your IP address?

Has this ever happened to you? Your computer stops working in one way or another, and when you call your computer repair person they walk you through

ways to troubleshoot. But in the process, they ask you the question you've been dreading the whole time: **Can you tell me your IP address, please?** You might be wondering, "My what?" Your IP address, or Internet Protocol address, is how your device identifies itself on a network. In the same way you have a legal name and a social security number, your computer, smartphone, tablet and other web-connected devices have an IP address. A site called **WhatIsMyIP.com** will tell you what your IP address is instantly. [Add it to your bookmarked webpages so you can pull it up whenever you need it.](#) What Is My IP? also lets you test the speed of your internet connection and provides helpful tips on hiding your IP address. [This is beneficial if you'd like to browse the web using public Wi-Fi.](#)

Click the blue button below to learn your IP address.

WhatIsMyIP.com



Remember a while back I mentioned using a HDMI switch if you don't have enough ports on your TV? Well, this Christmas our son Michael gave his Dad an Amazon Fire TV for streaming movies and TV shows. When I went to hook it up, sure enough there weren't enough ports available.! Instead of buying a new TV, 😊, I ordered a new switch. Now we can use all the devices we have without having to unplug them to use the Amazon Fire TV. A simple remote lets you choose between the ports you need to access. If you ever need to purchase one, let me know and I'll give you instructions on how to use it. 😊



Speaking of Amazon, look at what Prime offers. If you do a lot of shopping on-line it pays for itself in no time at all with free shipping they offer on thousands of items.



Amazon Prime Now Offers free books and magazines

Amazon treats their Prime members really well. With a choice of a \$99 annual membership cost or a monthly fee of \$10.99, the online retailer offers early access to deals, free two-day shipping, unlimited streaming of videos and music, and so many other perks. They keep coming up with new ways to make the service better. They recently launched Amazon Prints, which is a photo print service and Twitch Prime, which is for video game discounts. I used their print service to print out my Christmas card photo this year and was very pleased with the price and quality of the photo. They just added a new benefit and bookworms are going to love it! Amazon's Prime Reading is a book lover's dream. Prime members will have unlimited access to over 1,000 books, comics, magazines and Kindle singles. It will work similarly to their video streaming service where the selections rotate. So if a book you want to read isn't there now, it may become available in a couple months. You don't need to purchase a Kindle, **these selections can be read on any device**. Just download the free Kindle app, which is available for Apple and Android users. With the app, you can also check out over 4 million eBooks (some of which are free), use the built-in dictionary to look up words while you read, and sample books before you buy them.



License Keys!

One of the most frustrating things I find when dealing with computers is that you don't always have the license keys handy to reinstall software. Sometimes you just never find them again, and then you're stuck! There's no way to install a purchased copy of a program unless you put the license key in, and that can stop you dead in your tracks. The alternative? Purchase a new copy and that could be very expensive. Look at Photoshop that originally cost about \$700! Fortunately, in the case of software like that where the cost is outrageous, you can download open source software that is just like it. As an example.....Gimp is just like Photoshop! So how DO you find your license keys? The best thing is to find them "before" you need them and write them down and keep them in a safe place or you can try this - a free program that's aptly named LicenseCrawler.

You don't even have to enter your activation keys one by one. LicenseCrawler scans your PC's Windows Registry for Windows product keys and other serial numbers and licenses and automatically saves them. You can then install the portable version of LicenseCrawler on a USB stick to backup your keys and restore them when the need arises.

Note: LicenseCrawler supports all versions of Windows, even Windows 10. And, although it works with most programs, it can't store Windows product key.

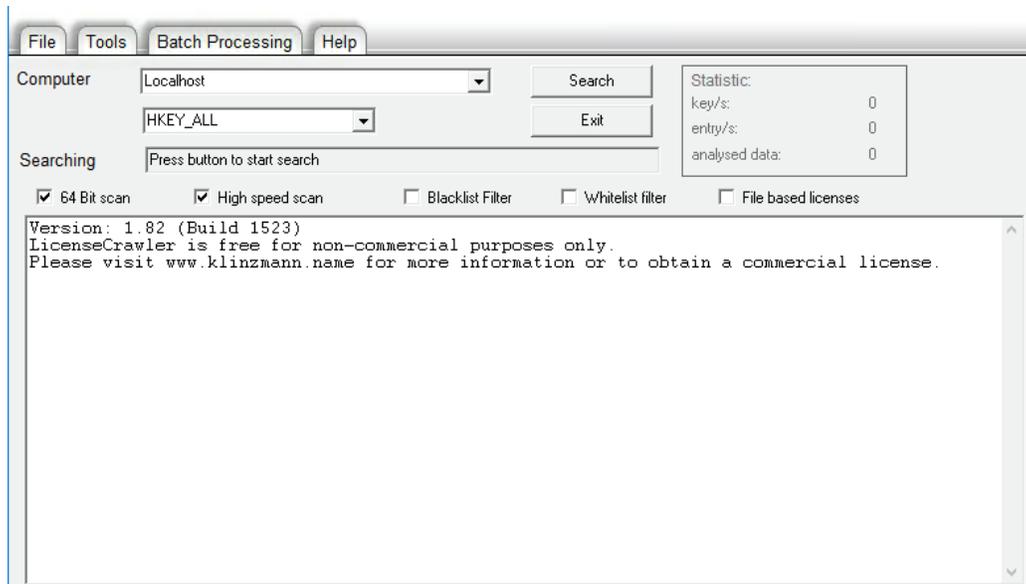
This might not be for the faint of heart, but it really is easy to use. Just follow the instructions below.

How to download and install

To download LicenseCrawler click on the blue download link below and this will take you to the LicenseCrawler download page. Scroll down and click on any download mirror link under the "Portable-Version available at following sites" section.

Next, extract the contents of the downloaded zip file and this will create a LicenseCrawler folder. Click on the LicenseCrawler.exe to start the program.

Note: If you are getting this error "Run-Time error '339': Component 'mscomctl.ocx' or one of its dependencies not correctly registered: a file is missing or invalid," try again by right-clicking on LicenseCrawler.exe then choose "Run As Administrator."



To start the license key scan just follow the initial prompts then specify the target computer (in most cases, just leave it on "localhost" and "HKEY_ALL") then click search.

Note: Although LicenseCrawler is free for private use, the unregistered version may display ads for other software, just wait for the ad preset timer to expire to proceed. To register the software, [visit its license information page](#).

Download Link

[Download for Windows - Free](#)

Now you can stop reading if you want! I do have some warnings to share that could keep your computer safe!



Don't install this OS update, its bricking Apple products!

Despite having its share of critics, an Apple Watch is the perfect complement to an iPhone. With fitness tracking, a built-in heart rate monitor, haptic notification alerts, voice-activated messaging, Dick Tracy-like phone functionality and Apple Pay on your wrist, the Apple Watch embodies the bold vision Apple has for wearables and mobile computing, in general. If you already use one of these smart watches, you know it gets watchOS updates on a regular basis. Typically, watchOS updates are released the same time iOS updates are. It turns out that this week's update is causing some very critical issues. Apple released watchOS 3.1.1 on December 13. Some users who installed the update were left with a "bricked" watch. Bricked means the gadget is completely unable to function, possibly permanently.

Fixing your bricked Apple Watch

- The model that was affected with the bad update is the Apple Watch Series 2. Apple is aware of the issue and has pulled the update so it's no longer available.
- What's happening is, the user begins downloading watchOS 3.1.1 and it gets stuck during the process. Some people said the progress bar was stuck for hours, so they tried to do a force restart.
- This led to either a red "!" showing up on the display or a frozen Apple logo, rendering the watch unusable.



- Apple's recommended fix for locked screens is another forced restart. To perform a forced restart, press and hold both the side button and Digital Crown for at least 10 seconds, until you see the Apple logo.
- If this process doesn't resolve the issue, you'll need to have your Apple Watch serviced. You can either take it to an Apple Store or click here to begin the process with Apple Support. In most cases, the watch will have to be sent to Apple so they can replace it.
- Some people with the Apple Watch Series 2 say that they were able to successfully update to the new watchOS. People with Series 0 and Series 1 watches were not affected by the update, other than it took a really long time to install.
- The best thing you can do is not update to 3.1.1. Apple should be working on a fix and waiting for the next update is your best course of action.

3 Apple fixes you need to make now

[The Apple Repair Station](#)

Apple is one of the most buzzworthy companies in the world. There's always so much hype surrounding the latest versions, such the iPhone 7 launch date or new iOS 10 features. Because of all this talk, consumers can hardly wait for the releases and their expectations are set very high.

Apple does their best to back up their good reputation by providing solutions when their products fall short. But as the owner of an Apple device, you must also do your part. Make sure you're doing these three things to keep your electronics running like new.

1. Install Updates



iOS 9.3.4

Apple Inc.

55.8 MB

iOS 9.3.4 provides an important security update for your iPhone or iPad and is recommended for all users.

For information on the security content of Apple software updates, please visit this website:

<https://support.apple.com/kb/HT201222>

The last two iOS updates were made to fix vulnerabilities in security. Apple's iOS Version 9.3.3 combatted a bug that was stealing passwords via text messages. Version 9.3.4 stopped memory corruption. It's important to listen to those pesky update notifications in order to keep your information safe.

2. Repair and exchange program



Like most companies, Apple has recalls when a lot of people are having the same problem with a certain product. Most recently there was a cable that wasn't sufficiently charging devices or failed to charge them at all. Apple told customers how to tell the difference between a faulty cable and a newer version that worked, how to get a free replacement cable, and how to get a refund if they already bought a new cable. Although the recalls are few and far between you may want to bookmark this page so that you can stay abreast of updates to the program.

3. Use Security Questions for your Apple ID

Security Info

To help ensure the security of your Apple ID, choose three questions and provide your answers below.

Security Questions
For your protection, these will help us verify your identity in the future.

Security Question

What was the first car you owned?

Who was your first teacher?

What was the first album you owned?

Where was your first job?

In which city were you first kissed?

Rescue Email Address
This will only be used to send instructions for resetting your security info if any security issues ever arise.

Apple uses industry-standard encryption to protect the confidentiality of your personal information.

Apple uses a two-factor authentication system when you try to log into your account from a device you haven't used before. You put in your Apple ID and then a one-time use passcode is sent to your phone (via text or phone call) that you

must enter to gain access. But if your phone is lost or stolen then you won't be able to receive the code, get into your account and protect your information. Adding a security question is another line of defense, just make sure the answers aren't too obvious or common. As long as you remember your Apple ID and your security questions' answers, you should always be able to get into your account.



Bug shutting down iPhones even when batteries have power

Although updates are supposed to bring new features, bug fixes, and security patches to your phone or tablet, there will always be unforeseen glitches along the way that may slip through the beta testing process. Although incremental, one such update that is reportedly causing battery issues is Apple's iOS 10.1.1 for iPhones and iPads.

According to a growing number of iPhone owners at Apple's official support forum, their phones are prematurely shutting down when their battery levels hit around the 30 percent mark.



iOS 10.1.1

Apple Inc.

64.2 MB

This update fixes bugs including an issue where Health data could not be viewed for some users.

For information on the security content of Apple software updates, please visit this website:

<https://support.apple.com/kb/HT201222>

Although this may point to hardware issues similar to the defective iPhone 6s batteries that Apple offered to replace, iPhone owners are also reporting that the affected 10.1.1 gadgets jump from a fully depleted battery to 30 percent in a matter of seconds after being plugged in. A number of people also claim that their battery woes started manifesting after updating to 10.1. These multiple reports and symptoms suggest that the degraded battery performance is due to the bugs in the 10.1 and 10.1.1 software updates rather than any hardware issues. Apple actually released two different versions of iOS 10.1.1. The first version dropped on October 31 and it included, among other things, security patches and bug fixes for Health data. A second version was released on November 9 and this was only available for those who haven't updated yet. There is no information on why this second minor update was required. As of this report, a few posts in Apple's support forum state that Apple is already aware of the issue and is now working on solutions to fix it. It is not known how widespread this issue is but some iPhones with iOS 10.1.1 are not affected by this battery issue. But for now, if you haven't updated to 10.1. or 10.1.1 yet, to avoid

any potential battery level bugs similar to those reported by multiple users, it is best to postpone it until Apple releases an official fix.

1 million Google accounts hit by malware that can access 74 percent of all Android phones

Malicious software that is masked as a genuine app for Android gadgets has been discovered by researchers at Check Point. Malware known as Gooligan has been infecting nearly 13,000 Android gadgets every single day since August. It has gained control of over a million Google accounts since that time. So far there have been 86 of the malicious apps found in third-party marketplaces. A few of those apps are named **Perfect Cleaner, StopWatch, and Wi-Fi Enhancer**. If one of these malicious apps is installed on your gadget, it begins the rooting process. Having root access of your gadget means the scammers can do whatever they want on it. Hackers can use the access to spy on you using the camera and microphone, read texts and emails, install other viruses or anything else they want. Once Gooligan has root access to the infected gadget, it downloads a malicious module from the Command and Control (C&C) server and installs it. Code is then injected into running Google Play or Google Mobile Services to copy user behavior to avoid being detected. [The module lets Gooligan steal a user's Gmail account and authenticate token information. It can also install apps from Google Play and give them positive ratings to boost their reputation. It also installs adware to bring in revenue.](#)

Who is affected?

Anyone who has an Android gadget that is running an older version of its operating system is at risk. These include Android 4 and 5, which are known as Android Jelly Bean, KitKat, and Lollipop. Nearly 75 percent of all Android users are running these operating systems. The reason these older operating systems are at risk is because security patches designed to fix certain flaws are not available to them or the user never installed them. You're also at risk if you download apps from third-party market places. It's a good idea to stay away from these and only get apps from trusted sources like the Google Play store. Even then, use caution!

The Gooligan malware can also infect your gadget if you click on malicious links sent through a phishing attack. Be especially careful!

What you need to know With Gooligan, infected gadgets download and install software that heists tokens used to authenticate the owner's phone. These tokens give them access to Google related accounts without needing to enter a password. These accounts include Gmail, Google Play, Google Docs, Google Drive, Google Photos and G Suite. You can find out if your gadget has been infected.

An online tool has been created by Check Point that will let you know if your gadget has been infected. [Click here](#) to access the Gooligan Checker tool. Once there, just type your Google address into the Gooligan Checker and it will tell you if you've been hacked.

One of the best ways to avoid **Gooligan** is to stay away from third-party app markets. However, since it is also being spread through phishing attacks you need to know how to avoid falling victim to them. Here are some things you can do:

- **Be cautious with links** - If you get an email or notification from a site that you find suspicious, don't click on its links. It's better to type the website's address directly into a browser than clicking on a link. Before you ever click on a link, hover over it with your mouse to see where it is going to take you. If the destination isn't what the link claims, do not click on it.
- **Do an online search** - If you get a notification about something that seems fishy, you should do an online search on the topic. If it's a scam, there are probably people online complaining about it and you can find more information.
- **Watch for typos** - Phishing scams are infamous for having typos. If you receive an email or notification from a reputable company, it should not contain typos.
- **Use multi-level authentication** - When available, you should be using multi-level authentication. This is when you have at least two forms of verification, such as a password and a security question before you log into any sensitive accounts.
- **Have strong security software** - Having strong protection on your family's gadgets is very important. The best defense against digital threats is strong security software.



And last but not least, make sure you do all your Windows updates. The number of problems with Internet Explorer still continues to rise, and the only defense you have is to make sure you update on a regular basis. For those of you have automatic updates, you don't need to worry!

Computer Term of the Month!

HijackThis



<http://www.computerhope.com> **HijackThis** is a software program from [Trend Micro](#) that is capable of performing a system scan on Microsoft Windows computers and generating logs that can be reviewed to help identify potential malware threats to the computer or other software running that may not be necessary.

As always there is a mixed bag of information, and my goal is to give you at least "One" piece of information that can help you. I know that a lot of it is confusing, but share it with someone you know that might be able to help you sort out what you need and don't need. Just remember; never respond to messages that popup on your screen saying you're infected, don't take calls from people claiming to be working for Microsoft, and never share your passwords with anyone! That's a big step in the right direction to keep yourself trouble free.

Happy New Year, and I wish you all good things in the coming year!

Warm Regards,

Shirl

Sources for information come from [Kim Komando.com](http://KimKomando.com), [Tom's Hardware](http://Tom'sHardware.com), [Data Doctors](http://DataDoctors.com), Apple.com, and [Microsoft](http://Microsoft.com).

